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MORAL SAYINGS

OF

CONFUCIUS,

A CHINESE PHILOSOPHER,

WHO LIVED FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-ONE YEARS BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA; AND WHOSE MORAL PRECEPTS HAVE LEFT A LASTING IMPRESSION UPON THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE;

WITH EMENDATIONS BY L. E. BARNARD.

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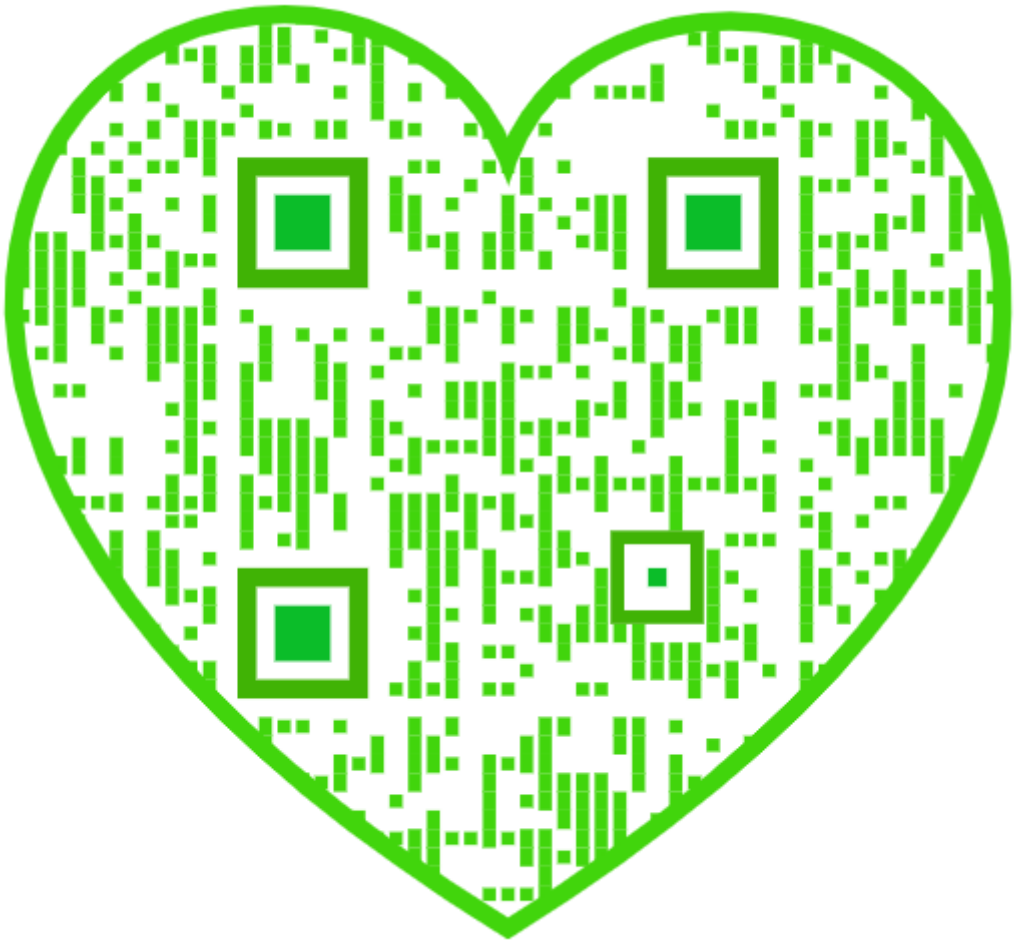

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THE PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

It is with much pleasure we offer this little work to the public, knowing that it is a treasure, as it truly is, we feel assured that it will be received happily. It is a volume of itself—full of truth and beauty, though a mere skeleton of its original. Truth is truth, ever so old, and is ever applicable in its place.

We have two particular reasons for publishing this work: one, is, to show a system of religion which existed 2000 years before the birth of Christ—600 years before the Jewish or Old Testament scriptures were written. The other is, to help induce or inculcate good morals with the world of mankind, as a principle of life, from the precepts and examples of the subject author.

The character of a great and good person is admirable; and when on the side of truth, ever remains an example to those who follow.

Confucius general character and moral sayings can do mankind no harm; it can do them good; therefore we offer a brief sketch of the same. Take it, and may its effect follow.

Publishers.

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CONFUCIUS

Was born in the Kingdom of Lu, (which is now the province of Chan Long) 551 years before the Christian era. He was but three years old when he lost his father Tcho leang he, who had enjoyed the highest offices of the kingdom, but left no other inheritance to his son, except the honor of descending from Ti ye, the 27th emperor of the second race of the Chang. His mother, whose name was Ching, and who sprung originally from the illustrious family of the Yen, lived 21 years after the death of her husband. Confucius did not grow in knowledge by degrees, as children ordinarily do, but seemed to arrive at reason and the perfect use of his faculties almost from his infancy. He took no delight in playing, running about and such amusements as were proper for his age; he had a grave and serious deportment, which gained him respect, and plainly foretold what he would one day be. But what distinguished him most, was his unexampled and exalted goodness. He honored his relations; he endeavored in all things to imitate his grandfather, who was then alive in China, and was a most holy man. One day, while he was a child, he heard his grandfather fetch a deep sigh, and going up to him with many bowings and much reverence, "May I presume," said he, "without loosing the respect I owe you, to inquire into the occasion of your grief? perhaps you fear that your posterity will degenerate from your virtue and dishonor you by their vices." "What put this thought into your head, said Coum-tse to him, and where have you learnt to speak after this manner?" "From yourself," replied Confucius: "I attend diligently to you every time you speak; and I have often heard you say, that a son who does not by his virtue support the glory of his ancestors, does not deserve to bear their name." After his grandfather's death he applied himself to Tcem-se, a celebrated doctor of his time, and under the direction of so great a master, soon made a surprising progress in antiquities, which he considered as the source from whence all general knowledge was to be drawn.

This love for the ancients very nearly cost him his life, when he was not more than sixteen years of age. Falling into discussion one day about the Chinese books with a person of high quality, who thought them obscure, and not worth the pains of searching into, "the books you despise," said Confucius, "are full of profound knowledge, which is not to be attained but by the wise and learned; and the people would think cheaply of them, could they comprehend them of themselves. This subordination of spirits, by which the ignorant are dependent upon the knowing, is very useful, and even necessary in society. Were all families equally rich and powerful, there could not subsist any form of government; but there would happen a yet stranger disorder, if mankind were all equally knowing: every one would be for governing, and none would think themselves obliged to obey. Some time ago," added Confucius, "an ordinary fellow made the same observation to me about the books as you have done, and from such a one indeed nothing better could be expected; but I wonder that you, a doctor, should thus be found speaking like one of the lowest of the people."

At the age of nineteen years he took a wife, who brought him a son, called Pe yu. This son died at fifty, but left behind him a son called Tsou-tse, who, in imitation of his grandfather, applied himself entirely to the study of wisdom, and by his merit arrived to the highest offices of the empire. Confucius was content with his wife, only so long as she lived with him; and never kept any concubines, as the customs of his country would have allowed him to have done, because he thought it contrary to the laws of nature.

It seems, however, that he divorced her after some time, and for no other reason, say the Chinese, but that he might be free from all incumbrances and connexions, and at liberty to propagate his philosophy throughout the empire. At the age of twenty-three, when he had gained considerable knowledge of antiquities and acquainted himself with the laws and customs of his country, he began to project a scheme for a general reformation. All the petty kingdoms of the empire now depend on the emperor; but, then, every province was a distinct kingdom, which had its particular laws, and was governed by a prince of

its own. Hence it often happened that the imperial authority was not sufficient to keep them within the bounds of their duty and allegiance; but especially at this time, when luxury, the love of pleasure, and a general dissolution of manners, prevailed in all those little courts.

Confucius, wisely persuaded that the people could never be happy, so long as avarice, ambition, voluptuousness and false policy reigned amongst them, resolved to preach up a severe morality; and accordingly he began to enforce temperance, justice, and other virtues, to inspire a contempt of riches and outward pomp, to excite to magnanimity and a greatness of soul, which should make men incapable of dissimulation and insincerity; and used all the means he could think of, to redeem his countrymen from a life of pleasure to a life of reason. He was everywhere known, and as universally beloved. His extensive knowledge and great wisdom soon made him known: his integrity and the splendor of his virtues made him beloved. Kings were governed by his counsels, and the people reverenced him as a saint. He was offered several high offices in the magistracy, which he sometimes accepted; but never from a motive of ambition, which he was not at all concerned to gratify, but always with a view of reforming a corrupt state, and amending mankind; for he never failed to resign those offices, as soon as he perceived that he could no longer be useful in them. He corrected many frauds and abuses in the mercantile way, and reduced the weights and measures to their proper standard. He inculcated fidelity and candor amongst the men, and exhorted the women to chastity and a simplicity of manners. By such methods he wrought a general reformation, and established every where such concord and unanimity, that the whole kingdom seemed as if it were but one great family.

The neighboring princes began to be jealous. They easily perceived, that a king, under the counsels of such a man as Confucius, would quickly render himself too powerful. Alarmed at this, the king of Tsi assembled his ministers to consider of methods which might put a stop to the career of this new government; and, after some deliberation, the following expedient was resolved upon. They got together a great number of young

girls of extraordinary beauty, who had been instructed from their infancy in singing and dancing, and were perfect mistresses of all those charms and accomplishments which might please and captivate the heart. These, under the pretext of an embassy they presented to the king of Lou, and to the grandees of his court. The present was joyfully received, and had its desired effect. The arts of government were immediately neglected, and nothing was thought of but inventing new pleasures for the entertainment of the fair strangers. In short, nothing was regarded for some months but feasting, dancing, shows, etc., and the court was entirely involved in luxury and pleasure. Confucius had foreseen all this, and endeavored to prevent it by advising the refusal of the present; and he now labored to take off the delusion they were fallen into, and to bring them back to reason and their duty. But all his endeavors proved ineffectual: there was nothing to be done: the severity of the philosopher was obliged to give way to the overbearing fashion of the court. Upon which he immediately quitted his employment, exiling himself at the same time from his native country; to try if he could find in other kingdoms, minds and dispositions more fit to relish and pursue his maxims.

He passed through the kingdoms of Tsi, Guei, and Tson, but met with unsurmountable difficulties every where. He had the misfortune to live in times when rebellion, wars and tumults raged through the empire. Men had no time to listen to his philosophy. They had even less inclination to do it; for they were ambitious, avaricious, and voluptuous. Hence he often met with ill treatment and reproachful language, and it is said that conspiracies were formed against his life; to which may be added, that his neglect of his own interests had reduced him to the extremest poverty. Some philosophers among his contemporaries were so affected with the terrible state of things, that they had rusticated themselves into the mountains and deserts, as the only places where happiness could be found; and would have persuaded Confucius to have followed them. But "I am a man," said Confucius, "and cannot exclude myself from the society of men, and consort with beasts. Bad as the times are, I shall do all I can to recall men to virtue; for in virtue are all

things, and if mankind would but once embrace it, and submit themselves to its discipline and laws, they would not want me or anybody else to instruct them. It is the duty of a good man, first to perfect himself and then to perfect others. Human nature," he added, "came to us from heaven, pure and perfect, but in process of time, ignorance, the passions, and evil examples corrupted it. All consists in restoring it to its primitive beauty, and to be perfect we must reascend to that point from which we have fallen. Love your neighbor as yourself. Let your reason, and not your senses, be the rule of your conduct; for reason will teach you to think wisely, to speak prudently, and to behave yourself worthily upon all occasions."

Confucius in the meantime, though he had withdrawn himself from kings and palaces, did not cease to travel about and do what good he could among the people, and among mankind in general. His disciples were chiefly of the nobles and the educated.

He is said to have had at least 3000 disciples; 72 of whom were distinguished above the rest by their superior attainments, and ten above them all by their comprehensive view and perfect knowledge of his whole philosophy and doctrines. He divided his disciples into four classes, who applied themselves to cultivate and propagate his philosophy, each according to his particular distinction. The first class were to improve their minds by meditation, and to purify their hearts by virtue. The second were to cultivate the arts of reasoning justly, and of composing elegant and persuasive discourses. The study of the third class was, to learn the rules of good government, to give an idea of it to the mandarins, and to enable them to fill the public offices with honor. The last class was concerned in delivering the principles of morality in a concise and polished style to the people. These ten chosen disciples were, as it were, the flower of Confucius' school.

He sent six hundred of his disciples into different parts of the empire, to reform the manners of the people; and, not satisfied with benefiting his own country only, he made frequent resolutions to pass the seas, and propagate his doctrine to the furthest parts of the world. Hardly any thing can be added to the purity

of his morality. He seems rather to speak like a doctor of a revealed law, than a man who had no light but what the law of nature afforded him: and, as an evidence of his sincerity, he taught as forcibly by example as by precept. In short, his gravity and sobriety, his rigorous abstinence, his contempt of riches, and what are commonly called the goods of this life, his continual attention and watchfulness over his actions, and, above all, that modesty and humility, which many of the Grecian sages came short of. He is said to have lived secretly three years, and to have spent the latter part of his life in sorrow. A few days before his last illness, he told his disciples with tears in his eyes, that he was overcome with grief at the sight of the disorders which prevailed in the empire: "The mountain," said he, "is fallen, the high machine is demolished and the sages are all fled." His meaning was, that the edifice of perfection, which he had endeavored to raise was entirely overthrown. He began to languish from this time; and the seventh day before his death he said, "The kings reject my maxims; and since I am no longer useful on this earth I may as well leave it." After these words he fell into a lethargy, and at the end of seven days expired in the arms of his disciples, in his seventy-third year. Upon the first hearing of his death, Ngai cong, who then reigned in the kingdom of Lou, could not refrain from tears: "The Tien is not satisfied with me," said he, "since it has taken away my Confucius." Confucius was lamented by the whole empire, which from that very moment began to honor him as a saint; and established such a veneration for his memory as will probably last forever in those parts of the world. Kings have built palaces for him in all the provinces, whither the learned go at certain times to pay him homage. There are to be seen upon several edifices raised in honor of him, inscriptions in large characters, "To the great master." "To the head doctor." "To the saint." "To the teacher of emperors and kings." They built his sepulchre near the city Kio fou, on the banks of the river Su, where he was wont to assemble his disciples; and they have since enclosed it with walls, which look like a small city to this day.

Confucius, as a reformer, sought to re-establish the religion of the fathers, and to lead mankind to a life of purity and virtue.

He attached no personality to the Deity, and prohibited his followers from doing so. He worshiped God as a power or principle pervading all nature; which power or principle he understood to be particularly represented in the sun, moon, and the elements. And, though the Chinese still hold his name in great veneration, and affect to be guided by his precepts, yet they have greatly departed from his practice, and the pure laws he laid down for their conduct through life.

Confucius did not trust altogether to the memory of his disciples for the preservation of his philosophy; but composed several books: and though these books were greatly admired for the doctrines they contained, and the fine principles of morality they taught, yet such was the unparalleled modesty of this philosopher that he never assumed the least honor about them. He ingeniously confessed, that the doctrine was not his own, but was much more ancient; and that he had done nothing more than collect it from those wise translators Yao and Chun, who lived one thousand five hundred years before him. These books are held in the highest esteem and veneration, because they contain all that he had collected relating to the ancient laws, which are looked upon as the most perfect rule of government. The number of these classical and canonical books, for so it seems they are called, is four. The first is entitled, "Ta Hio, the Grand Science, or the School of the Adults." It is this that beginners ought to study first, because it is, as it were, the porch of the temple of wisdom and virtue. It treats of the care we ought to take in governing ourselves, that we may be able afterwards to govern others; and of perseverance in the chief good, which, according to him, is nothing but a conformity of our actions to right reason. The author calls this book "Ta Hio, or the Grand Science," because it was chiefly designed for princes and grandees, who ought to govern their people wisely. "The whole science of princes," says Confucius, "consists in cultivating and perfecting the reasonable nature they have received from Tien, and in restoring that light and primitive clearness of judgment, which has been weakened and obscured by various passions, that it may be afterwards in a capacity to labor for the perfection of others. "To succeed then," says he, "we should begin within ourselves; and to this end it is necessary to have an insight into

the nature of things, and to gain the knowledge of good and evil; to determine the will towards a love of this good, and hatred of this evil; to preserve integrity of heart, and to regulate the manners according to reason. When a man has thus renewed himself, there will be less difficulty in renewing others: by this means concord and union reign in families, kingdoms are governed according to the laws, and the whole empire enjoys peace and tranquility."

The second classical or canonical book is called "Tchong Yong or the Immutable Mien;" and treats of the mien which ought to be observed in all things. Tchong signifies mien, and by Yong is understood that which is constant, eternal, immutable. He undertakes to prove, that every wise man, and chiefly those who have the care of governing the world, should follow this mien, which is the essence of virtue. He enters upon his subject by defining human nature, and its passions; then he brings several examples of virtue and goodness, as fortitude, prudence, and filial duty, which are proposed as so many patterns to be imitated in keeping this mien. In the next place he shows, that this mien and the practice of it, is the right and true path which a wise man should pursue, in order to attain the highest pitch of virtue. The third book, "Yun Lu, or the Book of Maxims," is a collection of sententious and moral discourses, and is divided into twenty articles, containing only the questions, answers, and sayings of Confucius and his disciples, on virtue, good works, and the art of governing well; the tenth article excepted, in which the disciples of Confucius particularly describe the outward deportment of their master. There are some maxims and moral sentences in this collection, equal to those of the seven wise men of Greece, which have always been so much admired. The fourth book gives an idea of a perfect government; it is called "Meng Tsee, or the Book of Montius;" because, though numbered among the classical and canonical books, it is more properly the work of his disciple Montius. To these four books they add two others, which have almost an equal reputation; the first is called "Hiao King," that is, "of Filial Reverence," and contains the answers which Confucius made to his disciple Tseng, concerning the respect which is due to parents. The second is called "Sias Hio," that is, "the Science, or the School of Children."

MORAL SAYINGS

OF

CONFUCIUS.

1. The great secret to acquire true knowledge is to cultivate and polish the reason, and to get a knowledge of things rather than words, by unceasing perseverance.

2. When you shall have thus fixed your mind, in this great design, give yourself up to meditation: reason upon all things within yourself; endeavor to have some clear ideas thereof; consider distinctly what presenteth itself to you, pass, without prejudice, solid judgment thereon; examine everything, and weigh everything with care. After examinations and reasonings of this nature, you may easily arrive at the end where you must fix,—at the end where you ought resolutely to stand,—viz. at a perfect conformity of all your actions with what reason suggests.

3. To improve a family, the head should take particular care to polish his own person, and so well to compose his words and actions, that they may neither say nor do anything to offend complaisance, nor to be inedifying; so that, in his whole carriage, he may become an example to his domestics. To obtain this exterior perfection, strive to rectify your mind, by subduing and governing your passions; because the passions are apt to remove the mind from its natural rectitude, and to abase and incline it to all sorts of vice.

4. To will, desire, love and hate, it is necessary to know.

5. It is impossible that he who knows not how to govern and reform himself and his own family, can rightly govern and reform a people.

6. When you see any virtuous action done be not slack to imitate it.

7. When the opportunity of doing a reasonable thing shall offer, make use of it without hesitation.

8. Cease not thy endeavors to suppress and to extirpate vice. Always behave yourself with the same precaution and discretion as you would do if you were observed by ten eyes and pointed at by so many hands.

9. Whatever is both honest and advantageous is amiable; and we love virtue because it includes both these qualities. Virtue is, moreover, an ornament which embellishes the whole person of him who possesses it,—his interior and exterior; to the mind it communicates inexpressible beauties and perfections; to the body it produces delightful sensations; it affords a certain physiognomy, certain transports, certain ways, which infinitely please; and, as it is the property of virtue to becalm the heart and keep the peace there, so this inward tranquility and secret joy produces a certain serenity in the countenance, a certain joy, an air of goodness, kindness and reason, which attract the esteem of the whole world.

10. The principal business of man is to rectify his mind, that his passions may be always calm; and, if it happen that they be excited, he ought to be moved no further than is necessary, that he may regulate them according to right reason. If he suffer himself to be transported with excessive anger, if he fall into a rage without any cause, or more than he ought with reason, he may then conclude, that his mind has not the rectitude it ought to have.

11. If we contemn and mortally hate a person, by reason of certain defects which we observe in him, and render not justice to his good and excellent qualities, if endowed therewith; if we permit ourselves to be troubled with too great a fear; if we abandon ourselves to an immoderate joy, or to an excessive sorrow, it cannot be said that our mind is in the state wherein it ought to be, that it has rectitude and uprightness.

12. It is not only necessary to observe moderation in general, as often as our passions are stirred, but that also in respect of those which are the most lawful, innocent, and laudable, we ought not blindly to yield up ourselves to them, and always follow their motions; it is necessary to consult reason. For example:—parents should love one another; nevertheless, as their amity may be too weak, so it may be also too strong; and, as to the one and the other case, there is doubtless, alike irregularity.

It is just for a child to love his father; but if a father has any considerable defect, if he has committed any great fault, it is the duty of a son to acquaint him with it, and tell him what may be for his good; always keeping a due respect, from which he ought not to depart. Likewise, if a son be fallen into any vice, it is the duty of a father to reprove him, and give him his advice thereon. But if their love be blind,—if their love be a mere passion, this affection is an irregular affection. Why? Because it digresseth from the rule of right reason.

13. A perfect man ought always to be busied in conquering himself. He must suit himself to the manners and tempers of others; but he ought always to be master of his own passions and actions; he must not suffer himself to be corrupted by the conversation or the examples of loose and effeminate persons; he must never obey till he has first examined what is commanded; he must never imitate others without judgment. In the midst of so many mad and blind persons who go at random, he must walk aright, and not incline to any party: this is the true valor. Moreover, if such a person be called to the magistracy, in a country where virtue be considered, and he change not his morals, how great soever the honors be to which he is advanced; if he there preserves all the good habits which he had when only a private man; if he do not permit himself to be led away with pride and vanity,—this man is truly valiant! Ah, how great is this valor! But if, on the contrary, he be in a country where virtue and laws are contemned, and that in the confusion and disorder which there prevail, he himself be depressed with poverty,—afflicted, reduced even to the loss of life; but yet, in the midst of so many miseries, he remain constant, preserve all the innocency of his manners, and never change his opinion; ah, how great and illustrious is this valor!

14. There are some men, who surpass the bounds of mediocrity, by affecting to have extraordinary virtues. They covet always to have something marvellous in their actions, to the end that posterity may praise and extol them. Certainly, says Confucius, I shall never be enamored with these glittering actions, where vanity and self-love have ever a greater share than virtue. I would only know and practice what is necessary to be known and practiced every where.

15. There are four rules, according to which a perfect man ought to square himself:

1. He ought to practice, in respect of his father, what he requires from his son.

2. In the service of the State, he ought to show the same fidelity which he demands of those who are under him.

3. He must act, in respect of his elder brother, after the same manner he would that his younger brother should act towards himself.

4. He ought to behave himself towards his friends as he desires his friends should carry themselves towards him. The perfect man continually acquits himself of these duties, how common soever they may appear. If he happen to perceive he has done amiss in anything, he is not at rest till he has repaired his fault: if he find that he has omitted any considerable duty, there is not any violence which he does not to himself, perfectly to accomplish it. He is moderate and reserved in his discourses; he speaks with circumspection; if to him occur a great affluence of words, he presumes not to expose it; he restrains himself. He is so rigorous a censor of himself, that he is not at rest when his words correspond not to his actions, and his actions to his words. Now the way by which a man arrives at this perfection is a solid and constant virtue.

16. That love which it is requisite for all men to have is not a stranger to man,—it is or should be man himself; or, if you will, it is a natural property of man, which dictates to him that he ought generally to love all men. Nevertheless, above all men, to love his father and mother is his main and principal duty; from the practice of which he afterwards proceeds, as by degrees, to the practice of that universal love, whose object is all mankind. It is from this universal love that distributive justice comes; that justice which makes us render to every one his due, and more especially to cherish and honor wise and upright men, and advance them to the dignities and offices of state. That difference which is between the love we have for our parents and what we have for others, between the love we bear to virtuous and learned men and that which we bear to those who have not so much virtue or ability; that difference is, as it were, a harmony, a

symmetry of duties, which reason has protected, and in which nothing must be changed.

17. We cannot observe the necessery rules of life, if there be wanting these three virtues:—prudence, which makes us discern good from evil; universal love, which makes us love all men who are virtuous; and that resolution which makes us constantly persevere in the adherence to good, and aversion for evil. But lest some fearful persons, not well versed in morality, should imagine that it is impossible for them to acquire these three virtues. they should know that there is no person incapable of acquiring them; that the impotence of man is voluntary. How dull soever a man is, should he be without experience; yet, if he desire to learn, and grow not weary in the study of virtue, he is not very far from prudence. If a man, although full of self-love, endeavor to perform good actions, behold him already very near that universal love which urges him to do good to all. If a man feel a secret shame when he hears impure and unchaste discourses, if he cannot forbear blushing thereat, he is not far from that resolution of spirit which makes him constantly seek after good, and have an aversion for evil.

18. If a person has deviated from the path of integrity and innocence, he needs only to excite the good that remains to make atonement by pains and industry, and he will infallibly arrive at the highest state of virtue.

19. It is necessary, after an exact and extensive manner, to know the causes, properties, differences and effects of all things.

20. Because that, amongst the things which are known, there may be some which are not perfectly known, it is necessary carefully to examine them, to weigh them minutely and in every circumstance, and thereon to consult wise, intelligent and experienced men.

21. Although it seems that we clearly apprehend certain things, yet, because it is easy to transgress, through precipitancy, in the too much or the too little, it is necessary to mediate afterwards, in particular, on the things we believe we know, and to weigh everything by the weight of reason, with all the attentiveness of spirit and with the utmost exactness whereof we are capable.

12. It is necessary to endeavor not to apprehend things after

a confused manner: it is requisite to have some clear ideas thereof, so that we may truly discern the good from the bad, the true from the false.

23. After we have observed all these things, we must reduce to action, and sincerely and constantly perform and execute, to the utmost of our power, the good resolutions we have taken.

24. If you undertake an affair for another, manage and follow it with the same eagerness and fidelity as if it were your own.

25. When you are with friends, discourse with them sincerely and be not satisfied with showing them slight appearances of kindness and esteem.

26. What think you of a poor man, who being able to extenuate and diminish his poverty through flattery, refuses to accept this offer, and courageously maintains that none but cowards and low-spirited men do flatter? What think you of a rich man who, notwithstanding his riches is not proud? I say that they are both praise-worthy; but that they are not to be considered as if they were arrived at the highest degree of virtue. He that is poor ought to be cheerful and content in midst of his indigence: behold wherein the virtue of the poor man consists. And he that is rich ought to do good to all: he that is of a poor and abject spirit does good only to certain persons: certain passions, certain particular friendships cause him to act; his friendship is interested; he disperses his wealth only with a prospect of reaping more than he sows; he seeks only his own interest; but the love of the perfect man is a universal love; a love whose object is all mankind.

27. We ought to be so far mild and courteous as to forget the offences of others, when they show signs of sincere repentance. We ought to treat them as if they had been innocent, and so far to forget their faults by our carriage towards them as to make those who have committed them, in some measure forget them, and so lose sight of that disgrace which can only discourage the pursuit of virtue.

28. Bewail not the dead with excess; not to constrain thy grief is to forget thyself. The wise man ought not to be overcome with grief: in him it is a weakness—it is a crime.

29. A good man never afflicts himself, nor fears anything—

he contemns injuries, credits not reproaches, and even refuses to hear bad reports.

30. Punishments should not be too common; if the Magistrates be good men, if none be advanced to the dignity of the magistracy but such persons as are distinguished by their honesty and exemplary life every one would apply himself unto virtue, because that advancement being that which all men naturally desire, every one willing to possess it would endeavor to render himself worthy the public approbation.

31. Hypocrites may be compared to those professed villains, who, the better to conceal their designs, appear wise and modest in the day-time, and who, by favor of the night, rob and commit the most infamous crimes.

32. Those who constantly consult their appetites and palates, never do anything worthy of their rank as men; they are rather brutes than rational creatures.

33. Endeavor to imitate the wise, and never discourage thyself, how laborious soever it may be: if thou canst arrive at thine end, the pleasure thou wilt enjoy will recompense all thy pains.

34. The virtue which is not supported with seriousness, gains no reputation among men.

35. Always remember that thou art a man, that human nature is frail, and that thou mayest easily fall. But if, happening to forget what thou art, thou chancest to fall, be not discouraged; remember that thou mayest rise again; that it is in thy power to break the bands which join thee to thy offence, and to subdue the obstacles which hinder thee from walking in the paths of virtue.

36. Take heed that thy promises be just, for, having once promised, it is not right to retract: we ought always to keep a free and voluntary promise.

37. When thou doest homage to any one, see that thy submissions be proportioned to the homage thou owest him; there are stupidity and pride in doing too little; but in overacting it, there are abjection and hypocrisy.

38. Eat not for the pleasure thou mayest find therein; eat to increase thy strength; eat to preserve the life which thou hast received.

39. Labor to purify thy thoughts; if thy thoughts are not ill, neither will thy actions be so.

40. The wise man has an infinity of pleasures; for virtue has its delights in the midst of the severities that attend it.

41. He who in his studies wholly applies himself to labor and exercise, and neglects meditation, loses his time, and he who only applies himself to meditation, and neglects experimental exercise, does only wander and lose himself. The first can never know anything exactly; his knowledge will always be intermixed with doubts and obscurities; and the last will only pursue shadows; his knowledge will never be

certain, it will never be solid. Labor, but slight not meditation: meditate, but slight not labor.

42. When we cannot apply any remedy to an evil it is vain to seek it. If by thine advices and remonstrances, thou couldst undo what is already done, thy silence would be criminal: but there is nothing colder than advice, by which it is impossible to profit.

43. Poverty and human miseries are evils in themselves, but the bad only resent them. It is a burden under which they groan, and which makes them at last sink: they even distaste the best fortune. It is the wise man only who is always pleased: virtue renders his spirit quiet; nothing troubles him, nothing disquiets him, because he practices not virtue for a reward: the practice of virtue is the sole recompense he expects.

44. It is only the good man who can make a right choice, who can either love or hate with reason, or as need requires.

45. He who applies himself to virtue, and strongly addicts himself thereunto, never commits anything unbecoming a man, nor contrary to right reason.

46. Riches and honors are good; the desire to possess them is natural to all men; but, if these things agree not with virtue, the wise man ought to contemn, and generously to renounce them. On the contrary, poverty and ignomy are evils; man naturally avoids them: if these evils attack the wise man, it is right that he should rid himself of them, but not by a crime.

47. He who mixes pride with his bad habits, and loves not frugality; is not disposed for the study of wisdom: thou oughtest not even to hold correspondence with him.

48. Afflict not thyself, because that thou art not promoted to grandeur and public dignities, rather grieve that thou art not, perhaps, adorned with those virtues that might render thee worthy of being advanced.

49. The good man employs himself only with virtue, the bad only with his riches. The first continually thinks upon the good and interest of the State; but the last has other cares, he only thinks on what concerns himself.

50. DO UNTO ANOTHER WHAT YOU WOULD HE SHOULD DO UNTO YOU, AND DO NOT UNTO ANOTHER WHAT YOU WOULD NOT SHOULD BE DONE UNTO YOU. THOU ONLY NEEDEST THIS LAW ALONE, IT IS THE FOUNDATION AND PRINCIPLE OF ALL THE REST.

51. The wise man has no sooner cast his eyes upon a good man, than he endeavors to imitate his virtue: but the same wise man has no sooner fixed his sight upon a man given up to his vices, than mistrusting himself, in a trembling manner he interrogates himself, if he be not like that man.

52. A child is in duty bound to serve and obey his parents. Parents

have failures: a child may acquaint them therewith, but he ought to do it with moderation and prudence; and if, whatever precaution he takes, he always meets with opposition, he ought to rest awhile, but never desist. Counsels given to parents do frequently draw punishments and severities upon the child; but on this account he ought to suffer without murmuring.

53. The wise man never hastens, either in his studies or his words; he is sometimes, as it were, mute, but, when it concerns him to act, and practice virtue, he, as I may say, precipitates all.

54. The truly wise man speaks but little, he is little eloquent. I do not see that eloquence can be of any great use to him.

55. A long experience is required to know a man. When I was young, I imagined, that all men were sincere; that they always practised what they said; in a word, that their mouth always agreed with their intentions: but now that I behold things with another eye, I am convinced that I was mistaken. At present I hear what men say, but I never rely thereon. I will examine whether their words be agreeable to their actions; and not always be content with their outward actions.

56. Give thy superfluities to the poor.

57. The defects of parents ought not to be imputed to their children. If a father, by his crimes, render himself unworthy of being promoted to honor, the son ought not to be excluded, if he do not render himself unworthy. If a son shall be of an obscure birth, his birth ought not to be his crime; he ought to be called to great employments, as well as the rich, if he has the qualifications necessary.

68. Prefer poverty and banishment to the most eminent offices of state, when it is a bad man that offers them, and would constrain thee to accept them.

59. The way that leads to virtue is long, but it is the duty to finish this long race; allege not for thy excuse, that thou hast not strength enough, that difficulties discourage thee, and that thou shalt be, at last forced to stop in the midst of thy course. Thou knowest nothing; begin to run: it is a sign that thou hast not as yet begun; thou should not use this language.

60. It is not enough to know virtue, it is necessary to love it; but it is not sufficient to love it, it is necessary to possess it.

61. He who persecutes a good man, makes war against himself and all mankind.

62. A magistrate ought to honor his father and mother; he ought never to falter in this just duty; his example ought to instruct the people. He ought not to contemn old persons, nor persons of merit: the people may imitate him.

63. A child ought to be under a continual apprehension of doing something that may displease his father: this fear ought always to possess him. In a word, he ought to act in whatever he undertakes,

with so much precaution, that he may never offend nor afflict him.

64. Greatness of spirit, power, and perseverance, ought to be the portion of the wise: the burden wherewith he is loaded is weighty; his course is long.

65. The wise man never acts without counsel. He sometimes consults in the most important affairs, even the least intelligent persons; men that have the least experience. When counsels are good we ought not to consider from whence they come.

66. Avoid vanity and pride. Although thou hast all the prudence and ability of the ancients, if thou hast not humility, thou hast nothing; thou art even the man of the world that deserves to be contemned.

67. Learn what thou knowest already, as if thou hadst never learned it; things are never so well known but that we may forget them.

68. Do nothing that is unhandsome, although thou shouldst have art enough to make thine action approved: thou mayest easily deceive the eyes of man for a time, but thou art always in danger of detection.

69. Never contract friendship with a man who is not better than thyself.

70. The wise man blushes at his faults, but is not ashamed to amend them.

71. He who lives without envy and covetousness may aspire at every thing.

72. Wouldst thou learn to die well?—learn first to live well.

73. Desire not the death of thine enemy; thou wouldst desire it in vain, if his life were not in thine hands.

74. Acknowledge thy benefits by the return of other benefits, but never revenge injuries.

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